

## Agency Information

AGENCY : ARMY  
RECORD NUMBER : 198-10007-10009

RECORD SERIES : CALIFANO PAPERS

AGENCY FILE NUMBER :

## Document Information

ORIGINATOR : CIA  
FROM :  
TO :

TITLE : CUBA: THE EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE CONCERNING COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

DATE : 00/00/0000  
PAGES : 9

SUBJECTS :  
COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES  
INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE, LATIN AMERICA

DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT  
CLASSIFICATION : Secret  
RESTRICTIONS : 1B  
CURRENT STATUS : Redact  
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 02/10/1998

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Califano Papers, Box 3, Folder 10. Draft paper re: the exchange of intelligence concerning Cuban subversive activities.

Department of the Army EO 13526  
 Declassify  Exclude  Exempt  
Authority \_\_\_\_\_  
 Refer To \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Date 12 AUG 15 By *[Signature]*

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CUBA

THE EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE  
CONCERNING COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

M/R

not submitted - because of CIA's request  
to review - review to be complete  
by 16 Mar 63. JEF

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GROUP - 1  
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

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CUBA

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I. Introduction

In combatting Castro-Communist subversion throughout Latin America, there is a fundamental requirement for intelligence -- a requirement which involves the timely acquisition and processing of information as well as its rapid dissemination, on a selective basis, to countries concerned. While efforts are now being made by CIA, AID, and the U.S. Military Services to improve Latin American intelligence systems, success thus far has been limited, and much remains to be done. It is not with this broad problem, however, that this paper is primarily concerned, but rather with the narrower matter of the need for a stronger program of exchanging essential information regarding Communist subversion in Latin America among those who need to know it.

II. The Nature and Scope of the Problem

1. Limiting Factors

a. There are many inhibitions which tend to discourage the exchange of intelligence on an international basis, even among allies. National privacy with regard to the inner workings of an intelligence system must be preserved. Compounding the problem further, where Latin America is concerned, is the divisive influence of the long history of rivalries, wars, jealousies and disputes which have characterized relations among the nations concerned. The wounds of past conflicts among pairs and groupings of nations are not completely healed. There is lingering hostility between Peru and Ecuador deriving from their boundary war. Chile and Bolivia continue at odds over the Rio Lauca and the question of

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Bolivian access to the sea, and, even now, Nicaraguan insurgents are harbored within the borders of both Costa Rica and Honduras. It could hardly be expected that these countries would be eager to exchange intelligence on a full and frank basis.

b. Beyond this, Latin America is not a homogeneous entity in social, political, or economic terms, and attitudes toward the Castro-Communist subversive menace vary widely. A completely unified approach toward exchange of intelligence concerning this menace, therefore, cannot be regarded as attainable.

c. Additional impediments to intelligence exchange are the generally low level of competence of most Latin American intelligence services, their lack of rapid, secure means of communication, the absence of adequate security systems, and the lack of security consciousness. Deficiencies in security safeguards must necessarily limit the exchange of intelligence obtained covertly by any of the nations involved, and particularly the United States, which has the most sophisticated system and hence the greatest need for protection.

d. These defects promise to persist, since the governments of some countries have little desire to develop a competent career security service. There is a fear that the existence of an efficient service would constitute a threat to further activities of members of the existing governments at such time as they might find themselves out of power. Moreover, many Latin American intelligence services tend to label as "subversives" those of their own nationals resident in other countries who are opposed to the existing government.

e. These realities all underscore the fact that multilateral intelligence exchange must be approached on a most circumscribed basis. It should not be concluded, however, that nothing of value can be accomplished multilaterally. With proper definition, limiting the problem of exchange to matters directly related to communist subversive activities, such as the movement to

and from Cuba of subversives, the production and movement of propaganda materials which threaten internal stability, the movement of arms, and the movement of funds, it should be practicable to marshal a useful measure of cooperation. In pursuing this effort, it will be important to draw a sharp distinction between secret intelligence gained by covert means and information obtained openly. The former involves the requirement to protect national secrets both as to sources and acquisition methods employed. The latter, which can be of great value, can be exchanged without fear of compromise.

2. Current Exchange Arrangements

a. At present there is little organized exchange of intelligence among the Latin American nations. There is a limited amount of informal exchange, often on a basis of personal relationships between government officials having a community of interest with respect to a particular matter.

b. The Central Intelligence Agency has established working liaison arrangements in some Latin American countries where such relations have been considered to be in the best interest of the United States. Most of the intelligence concerning subversion in Latin America available to the CIA is derived from covert operations or through contacts with another intelligence or security service. This inhibits the passing of such information to agencies of a third country. There is, however, a substantial amount of intelligence available from overt or non-sensitive sources which can be provided to other countries. In 1962, CIA received information reports from [ ] services with which liaison is maintained in Latin America and released reports to [ ] recipients. Intelligence items exchanged included collated studies, weekly intelligence reviews, name traces and travel reports.

c. The U.S. Army, through its attaches, currently has an informal arrangement involving bilateral exchanges of intelligence with Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Peru, Paraguay and Venezuela. Information provided by the Army has been concerned

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with subversive personalities, communist infiltration, weapons movements and related matters. Reciprocal intelligence received has been of small value. The Army also provides selected information on subversive activities to Brazil, Chile, Guatemala and Mexico, without reciprocation. The Navy has established a Navy-to-Navy program for the exchange of intelligence among nine South American navies, the Mexican Navy and the U.S. Navy.

d. Exchanges of information are also effected from time to time through channels of the Department of State.

e. As yet, however, the program for the provision by United States agencies of information on subversion to Latin American governments has not been developed to an adequate degree. Since the United States possesses the most extensive acquisition capabilities, as well as the only secure and reliable means of rapid communication throughout Latin America (currently in process of improvement), the development of an integrated United States system for bilateral exchange offers the greatest possibility of achieving the results desired.

f. United States experience in the matter of intelligence exchange in Latin America, and in other areas of the world, has led to the conclusion that bilateral arrangements are more fruitful than multilateral arrangements such as those established within the framework of NATO, CENTO and SEATO. Nevertheless, this experience has shown also that multilateral arrangements can be of some use, particularly in creating an awareness of the need for intelligence exchange.

g. The concept of an exchange of information among members of the OAS with regard to subversive activities has been put forward at numerous Inter-American meetings, but has not been implemented, largely for the reasons set forth in Section II.1. Under the Punta del Este decisions, the OAS members were urged to cooperate in strengthening their capacity to counteract threats or acts of aggression, subversion or other dangers to peace and security. The Council of the OAS is charged with maintaining vigilance over Castro-Communist subversion, and a

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"Special Consultative Committee on Security (SCCS)" is established to give technical advice on request to governments and the Council on matters relating to subversion. All American governments have been asked to furnish information on Castro-Communist activities to serve as the basis for studies and recommendations by the Council of the OAS on how to counteract them. Since the Punta del Este meeting, the OAS has been making slow progress in the countersubversion field, but there has as yet been no significant exchange of intelligence through its machinery.

h. The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) has also demonstrated an awareness of the need for exchanging intelligence regarding communist subversion. Annex 4 of the General Military Plan prepared by the IADB requests the American States to report information to the Board and to establish agreements among themselves for exchanging information of collective interest. The United States has approved the General Military Plan, but similar action has not been taken by all member countries.

i. This brief summary serves to illustrate that there is much room for expansion of bilateral intelligence exchange arrangements among the Latin American nations themselves, which is now minimal at best, as well as a need to create an expanded program for bilateral intelligence exchange between the United States and individual countries, and finally, a requirement to develop the possibilities of a multilateral approach within the recognized limitations involved.

III. Actions Recommended

1. Increase the existing bilateral exchange of intelligence conducted by CIA, DOD, and other U.S. agencies, where it is found possible to establish appropriate arrangements for the exchange of selected information consistent with security requirements.

2. Complete current priority project to evaluate feasibility and desirability of establishing military intelligence centers at the headquarters of the Caribbean Command and the Caribbean Sea Frontier, Atlantic Command, for further dissemination of intelligence as appropriate in conjunction with our Military Alerting System, for rapid processing and dissemination when appropriate, of

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intelligence on subversive activity directly to the countries concerned through the U.S. Embassies therein.

3. Increase and expedite the existing flow of intelligence on subversion from CIA and the other elements of the American Embassies in Latin America to Caribbean Command as well as to CIA headquarters for further dissemination as appropriate.

4. Increase the dissemination to Latin American governments, by all U.S. agencies concerned, of unclassified studies, reports and other non-sensitive information concerning Castro-Communist subversion.

5. Encourage Latin American countries to engage in bilateral exchange of intelligence on Castro-Communist subversive activities.

6. Continue the development at high priority of U.S. communications in Latin America.

7. Increase where feasible emphasis on the provision of U.S. intelligence advisors to Latin American countries. Discourage their employment of intelligence advisors from nations other than the U.S.

8. Intensify and increase as applicable existing AID, CIA, and Military programs for the training and equipping of Latin American internal security and intelligence services. Establish such programs in additional countries where it is found to be in the best interests of the United States and acceptable to the country concerned.

9. Undertake action in the OAS to stimulate governments to keep the Council and the SCCS fully informed on a continuing basis of the nature and incidence of subversive activities in their respective countries.

10. Encourage Latin American countries to approve the General Military Plan of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), and, in accordance with Annex 4 thereof, furnish to the IADB intelligence information and estimates concerning Castro-Communist subversive activities.

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11. Undertake to arrange for regional meetings of senior intelligence and security service representatives of Latin American countries and the United States for the purpose of fostering the exchange of intelligence concerning Castro-Communist subversive activities and developing the necessary mechanisms and procedures therefor.

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